6: Sugiura & Befu E-4, 5 (1951) 1962
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and the leader of the patrilineal group, *utar-pake*, which suggests that the kin group and the territorial group were regarded conceptually as separate entities.[5] Takakura (1944: 63) states that the head of a kin group (*utar-pake*) "was traditionally the representative of a village and at the same time maintained the order of the village." This suggests that the head of the patrilineal group was also the village leader. If a village included two or more patrilineal groups, the head of one of them seems to have been the village leader. The specific duties of the village headman are not known; but whatever they may have been, the headman does not seem to have had any great authority. The position of the village head was inherited patrilineally within the descent group as a whole—in contrast to the "man's treasure," which was inherited within the family.

(6) *Ancestor worship* (*shinnurappa*). Since a detailed analysis of Ainu ancestor worship is available elsewhere (Kubodera 1952), we shall consider only the questions of (a) who participated in these rites and (b) which ancestors were worshipped. The family head or a closely related older patrikin, knowledgeable in ceremonial matters, officiated at the ritual. The family head's daughters and his father's sisters and daughters, who, of course, belonged to different matrilineal groups, also participated. The ancestors worshipped on these occasions were the male participants' fathers, grandfathers, and other male ancestors and the female participants' mothers, grandmothers, and other ancestresses. As the priest prayed to these ancestors through the deity of fire, they in turn convoked other ancestors, so that a large number of ancestors were worshipped at the same time. All the male ancestors propitiated were members of a single patrilineal group, whereas the ancestresses belonged to several different matrilineal groups.

Principal Features of the Matrilineal Descent Group

(1) *Belt.* Underneath her clothes every adolescent or mature Ainu woman wore a belt, called *upshor* (Segawa 1952). This belt was never to be shown or talked about, and a great deal of magical belief was associated with it. Women who belonged to the same matrilineal group wore belts which were made in the same manner and differed from those worn by women of other descent groups. The belt was thus the symbol and proof of membership in the matrilineal group, as the ancestral crest was of the patrilineal group. A woman without a female blood relative from whom to inherit a belt sometimes received one from a woman belonging to a different matrilineal descent group. Moreover, if a woman married a son or brother of a woman who possessed the same type of belt as hers—in violation of the exogamous rule to be discussed below—the bride changed the type of belt she wore. Her daughter, however, reverted to the use of the original belt.

(2) *Inheritance of special skills.* Magical skills to cure illness and to communicate with the gods, midwifery, and the ability to recite Ainu epics are said to have been inherited matrilineally by

women. These skills were conceived to be biologically innate rather than learned.

(3) *"Woman's treasure."* Woman's treasure was passed from mother to eldest daughter. Some informants maintain that, though the eldest daughter was the custodian of the treasure, her sisters had legitimate access to it. In the absence of a daughter, the wife of the eldest son inherited the treasure. The family, rather than the matrilineal group, was the unit of inheritance as it was for "man's treasure."

(4) *Marriage.* Marriage usually took place within the village. Intervillage marriage tended to be avoided because of expense; it involved bride exchange: a girl of the village to which the new bride came had to be sent to the bride's village. The girl thus given in exchange did not necessarily marry into the bride's family, but she did have to marry a man of the latter's village. This practice of bride exchange tended to concentrate the women of a matrilineal group and to perpetuate its descent line in the same village. Compared with men of the same patrilineal group, however, women belonging to the same descent group were more dispersed. Rules of exogamy will be discussed below in connection with the matrilineage.

(5) *Cooperation among matrikin.* Handling of the dead at funerals was the task of matrilineally related women. According to one informant, a woman's body was attended to by her matrikin in the following order of preference: her mother, her mother's sisters, her own sisters, and her other matrikin.[6] In illness, a sick Ainu woman preferred to be nursed by her matrikin, and a sick Ainu man by his mother's matrikin. The birth of the first child took place in the mother's natal home; later births in her husband's home. While it was desirable for a woman to have her matrikin serve as midwives, this was not necessary; at childbirth the assistance of many women was required. These assistants included not only the pregnant woman's matrikin but also her father's female relatives, if the childbirth took place in her natal home; if it took place in her husband's home, the husband's female relatives helped. On the seventeenth day following birth a ceremony called *kamui ko yayattasa* ("thanksgiving to gods") was performed by the mother's male consanguines, attended by blood relatives, of both sexes, of her mother's father and of her husband. A woman was not allowed to officiate at a thanksgiving ceremony but had to depend on a male relative—most often either a brother or a son of one of her matrikin or else one of her father's patrikin.

(6) *Ancestor worship (shinnurappa).* When a husband worshipped his ancestors, his wife also participated in the ceremony. At the same time, she worshipped her own matrilineal ancestresses and her father's ancestors. Generally speaking, she placed the greatest emphasis on the worship of her matrilineal ancestresses. A man, however, worshipped his patrilineal ancestors exclusively. Noteworthy in this connection is the Ainu conception of the afterworld. It appears that women were thought to join their dead matrikin and men their dead patrikin. If this was actually the belief, the distinc-